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LETTER DATED 22 JULY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AFGHANISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the letter dated 22 July 1993 from His Excellency Mr. Hedayat Amin Arsala, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, addressed to Your Excellency concerning recent tensions on the Afghan/Tajik frontiers.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. G. Ravan FARHADI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 22 July 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan addressed to the Secretary-General

The Islamic State of Afghanistan highly appreciates Your Excellency's appeal dated 21 July 1993 calling for the exercise of restraint in Tajikistan (SG/SM/5045).

The recent developments on the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan arising out of an unjustifiable artillery attack of the armed forces of the Russian Federation and Tajikistan on Afghan soil is a matter of serious concern to the Islamic State of Afghanistan and among the Afghan people.

Responding to Your Excellency's appeal of 21 July 1993, the Islamic State of Afghanistan for its part reassures Your Excellency of its readiness to engage in serious and sincere talks for the peaceful solution of the problems through understanding and negotiations, that would ensure the return of the Tajik refugees back to their homeland in safety and honour.

The Afghan Government categorically rejects the protests expressed in the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation dated 14 July 1993 (S/26110) and again repeated in the 16 July 1993 statement of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Tajikistan (S/26092) stating that "the Mujahidin and the subunits under the Ministry of Defence of Afghanistan" are responsible for the events of 13 July 1993. (Elsewhere the Russian Federation's statement mentions only "irregular forces".)

The Islamic State of Afghanistan strongly rejects the allegations that the Tajiki refugees are trained and armed in Afghanistan and sent to Tajikistan for destructive activities. The accusation that the Islamic State of Afghanistan has had an involvement in the so-called attacks is completely unfounded.

The Afghan Government denotes with regret the mention of the threatening expression of "inevitability of retribution" in the Russian Federation's statement and "irreparable blow to good-neighbourly relations between the two countries" in the Tajikistan Government's statement.

Excellency,

The deployment of the Commonwealth of Independent States' Armed Forces on the border of Afghanistan, as well as their massive attacks of 15 and 16 July on villages in the Chaah-e Aab, Yangi Qal'a, Dasht-e Qal'a, and Darqad districts of Tukhar province has caused a major and deep concern to the Islamic State of Afghanistan. Due to the severity of the attacks, more than 360 innocent civilian people have been killed, among them women, children and the elderly. Over 400 people have been injured and a considerable number of houses have been destroyed and wheat harvest burned up in a vast area. Also, as another result of these attacks, more than 6,000 families have been displaced from their homes.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan considers these attacks a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as of internationally accepted norms governing the relations among States.

Taking into account the reality that not too long ago, Afghanistan was the victim of massive attacks and invasion by the Red Army of the former Soviet Union, which continued for more than a decade, as a result of which 1.7 million Afghans were killed, more than 5 million left their homeland (of whom still over 3 million have not returned), almost 2 million were crippled, more than 10 million land mines have been planted on our soil, and the country is virtually destroyed in every sphere.

The reoccurrence of an aggression from the north revives the feelings of pain and suffering of the Afghan nation and seriously jeopardizes the endeavours of the Islamic State of Afghanistan to establish normal relations with the Russian Federation.

The pursuit of such an unfriendly attitude towards Afghanistan, especially the continued deployment of the Russian Federation and the other CIS' Armed Forces to the Afghan borders as well as resorting to artillery attacks against the territory of Afghanistan under such an unfounded pretext is not only contrary to our expectation but it may open another era of animosity between the two countries.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan once again would like to declare that the actual cause of recent tension is mainly of a humanitarian nature.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan has felt and continues to feel a moral responsibility in extending humanitarian assistance to about 90,000 Tajiki refugees. These efforts are purely of a humanitarian kind and are rendered in the light of historic cultural, linguistic and religious ties between the people of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. This feeling of responsibility is being maintained in spite of the scarcity of Afghanistan's own available resources as a war-stricken country.

Excellency,

The Islamic State of Afghanistan has faithfully observed the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and in particular, in the case of its northern neighbour, the Republic of Tajikistan.

Afghanistan, as a recent victim of aggression, is anxious, more than any other Member State of the region, to see the return of peace and stability to the long-suffering land of Tajikistan as well as the country's advancement on the path of national reconciliation.

To play its sincere and active role in the creation of a sound atmosphere for the realization of the said objective, the President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, during the ECO Summit Conference held in Istanbul, Turkey, proposed the establishment of a commission representing the countries concerned to find a peaceful solution through negotiation and dialogue, to the problem on the borders between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. As a result, there was an agreement on the establishment of a quadripartite commission composed of Afghanistan,

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Russian Federation to review and consider the situation in search of a just and lasting solution to the problems.

It would have been in the interest of regional peace and stability, as well as of the consolidation of friendly relations among States in the region, if the Russian Federation would have welcomed the readiness of the Afghan side and reciprocated the understanding and dialogue instead of resorting to armed attacks and hostility.

Appreciating the good wishes towards the people of Tajikistan, as expressed in the statement of the Russian Federation, we are certain that the plight of almost 90,000 Tajikistani refugees, who are also part of the Tajik nation, would also secure the sympathy and invite the attention of the Russian Federation.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan also expects the United Nations to urgently review the situation and to exert efforts to ensure the return of the Tajikistani refugees to their homes in safety and honour.

For the time being, Afghanistan expects the United Nations and the UNHCR to expand their humanitarian assistance to the Tajikistani refugees in Afghanistan and to assist in the planning of their repatriation.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan is also in great need of the United Nations humanitarian assistance to the more than 6,000 civilian population of Afghanistan displaced as a result of the recent artillery bombardment of the Russian Federation on the Afghan territory.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my most sincere wishes for your success in your vast endeavours towards the consolidation of peace in many areas of the world where international tensions prevail.

HEDAYAT AMIN ARSALA
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic State
of Afghanistan